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05x01 - Move and Leave

by **bunniefuu**

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FADE IN: RAGE STORYBOARDS

Close-ups of storyboards flashing by in Pride colors. Select scenes: Swineheart plotting; Rage being overpowered by clones; Rage bound, hanging upside down amid fire with the art direction of "push in"; a religious cross with "cut to medium shot of Swineheart camera tracks around him"; the town as clones, attacking Rage and Zephyr. Cut to the Rage logo cover page: Rage Storyboards.

ART DIRECTION: Panel 1 "Rage" Scene 1. Fade in. Rage Logo - a tear rips across, revealing Gayopolis below.

COMIC BOOK NARRATOR [VO]

In a world of shadow, where the undead stalk the night...

STORYBOARD: Arial view of a street with two cars and an alley filled with people.

ART DIRECTION: Scene 1 Page 3 X-DISS. To alley as Rage and Zephyr fight against clones. Camera reveals sea of clones.

STORYBOARD: Rage and Zephyr fighting clones. Rage holds one clone in a left-arm headlock, in mid-punch with his right. Zephyr in mid-punch of a clone.

COMIC BOOK NARRATOR [VO]

Rage and Zephyr struggle to escape the Land of the Clones.

STORYBOARD: Sea of clones, arms extended to attack.

ART DIRECTION: Cut. Close on Rage and Zephyr in battle.

STORYBOARD: Rage and Zephyr being overpowered by the sea of clones.

ART DIRECTION: Push in

STORYBOARD: Rage, fists raised, with a clone on his back.

STORYBOARD: Zephyr, right arm raised, held by two clones.

STORYBOARD: Their struggle, clones closing in.

DISSOLVE TO: INT. BABYLON - NIGHT

The clones become the dancers. The dramatic comic book soundtrack melts into Babylon's techno thumpa-thumpa. We move through the crowd to find Brian and Michael dancing. While Brian rides a high, Michael has his hands on Brian's shoulders.

MICHAEL

You know what amazes me?

BRIAN

What, dear?

Drug vial in hand, he prepares a hit. They keep dancing.

MICHAEL

Outside, a child is born, a man dies, a couple gets married.

BRIAN

The ever-changing kaleidoscope of life.

He takes a bump. Michael grins.

MICHAEL

In here...

SCENE FREEZES: Dancers in mid-move, confetti in mid-drop, music gone, color bled to blue tones. Michael and Brian are unaffected. What remains is an echo-sound to their voices, as if in an empty warehouse. Michael moves through the crowd, Brian following.

MICHAEL

...nothing changes. Everything's the same. Same hot guys. Same thumpa-thumpa. Same shaved chest.

BRIAN

Hmn. Mmmm.

Grinning, he trails a finger down a nearby bare chest.

BRIAN

And what a comfort it is to know.

MICHAEL

But it's all a lie. An illusion.

He swipes a hand across some confetti. It falls at his touch, tinkling like glass.

MICHAEL

Just cheap theatrics.

Brian swoops in for Michael's arm, dragging him back to their dancing spot.

BRIAN

Nevertheless, let's - keep - dancing.

SCENE UNFREEZES: At the word 'dancing,' everything picks up exactly as before. Brian and Michael dance. Shots of the crowd, the go-go boys, back to Brian and Michael.

MICHAEL

I promised Ben I'd be home by midnight.

BRIAN

[to the ceiling] How pathetic!

Michael heads off the dance floor. Brian follows, arm across Michael's shoulders.

BRIAN

Well, be sure and thank your husband for me for allowing you to come out and play with your poor, lonely friend.

MICHAEL

I notice you left out 'old.' Well, you'll be a lot less lonely when you're reunited with your beloved.

Brian stops walking.

BRIAN

And you better not say anything.

Michael turns, Brian's hand gripping his right shoulder.

MICHAEL

When have I ever--

Brian stares at him. Beat. Michael concedes with a nod.

MICHAEL

Fine. Never mind. I give you my word.

Brian, hands on hips.

BRIAN

Swear to it.

Points at him.

BRIAN

On the memory of Marilyn Monroe.

Michael laughs.

MICHAEL

I swear on the memory of Marilyn Monroe that I will not tell Justin that you are flying to L.A. this weekend to surprise him and that you love him and that you miss him more than words can express.

Brian has rolled his eyes and glanced away and back.

BRIAN

Ohhhh! Who said anything about that?

MICHAEL

Look, you don't fool me, Mr. I am a rock, I am an island. I know how hard this has been for you.

Brian holds Michael's neck.

BRIAN

Mmm. You have no idea, Mikey, how hard.

Brian kisses him before a brief lean-hug and walking away.

INT. BACKROOM

Two guys f*cking. Brian, up against the wall getting sucked, watches then recognizes the f*ck. He grins.

BRIAN

Hey, Todd. How's it going?

TODD

Fine.

Brian smirks. His cell phone rings and he pulls it out to look.

BACKROOM GUY [OS]

Hey, dickhead! Turn off your f*cking cell phone!

Brian does a scowl-chin-lift in his direction as he flips open the phone.

BRIAN

What's up?

CUT TO: EXT. CALIFORNIA - DAY

Justin, towel around his waist, stands poolside at an all-male party. The men are in shorts/Speedos or nude.

JUSTIN

Just lying here...

SPLIT SCREEN SHOT:

Justin on the phone, nude men walking around.

Group of mostly nude men dancing.

Group of mostly nude men talking, getting sucked.

JUSTIN

...eating a bag of Doritos, reading The Brothers Karamazov. What about you?

CUT TO: INT. BABYLON - NIGHT

SPLIT SCREEN SHOT:

Brian at Babylon, getting sucked.

Guys having sex, sex, sex.

Guys having sex, sex, sex.

BRIAN

Anna Karenina and Pringles.

Sound of Justin's laughter.

JUSTIN

[on the phone] I always said...

SPLIT SCREEN SHOT:

Justin at the pool party, walking to sit on a couch.

California dancing, smoking, hand shaking, drinking.

Brian at Babylon, getting sucked.

Babylon sex, sex, sex.

JUSTIN

...it was our love of Russian literature and snacks high in saturated fat that brought us together.

Brian laughs.

BRIAN

So, how's work?

JUSTIN

Up to my a*s in storyboards. But Brett is thrilled.

SPLIT SCREEN SHOT:

Close-up of Justin on the phone.

Close-up of Brian on the phone.

JUSTIN

He says he never could have envisioned the project without me. He's even talking about a sequel.

BRIAN

My superhero.

JUSTIN

Only trouble is, pre-production is slower than we expected so I might have to stay longer than I thought.

Brian frowns as his shot widens to full screen.

INT. BABYLON

BRIAN

How much longer?

EXT. CALIFORNIA

JUSTIN

Another three months. Maybe four.

INT. BABYLON

Brian leans his head back against the wall, disappointed. He nods a little.

JUSTIN

[on the phone] The studio is screaming, but Brett says not to worry, that happens all the time.

EXT. CALIFORNIA

JUSTIN

You're not pissed, are you?

INT. BABYLON

BRIAN

Why the f*ck would I be pissed? Told you before you went out there, the only reason I'd be pissed is if you didn't go.

JUSTIN

[on the phone] So when are you coming out here?

EXT. CALIFORNIA

Justin looks over to the guys f*cking on the couch next to his, laughing.

JUSTIN

You'd f*cking love it.

INT. BABYLON

BRIAN

You never know when I just might drop in.

EXT. CALIFORNIA

JUSTIN

Well, you better hurry. The way things are going, I'll be doing Son of Rage.

INT. BABYLON

Brian smiles, looks down.

EXT. CALIFORNIA

JUSTIN

I miss you.

INT. BABYLON

Brian clears his throat, presses his head against the wall.

BRIAN

Hey, you take care of yourself, you hear? You do the best work you can. And have the best time you can. That's all that matters.

Beat. He hangs up.

EXT. CALIFORNIA

Justin looks at his phone, ends the call and folds it. Across in the near distance, a hottie is giving him the eye.

INT. BABYLON

Brian moaning, getting sucked.

EXT. CALIFORNIA

Long shot of Justin on the couch, Hottie's back in the forefront as he sits on the pool's edge.

INT. BABYLON

Brian moaning, getting sucked.

EXT. CALIFORNIA

Justin gets up.

INT. BABYLON

Brian. More moaning. More sucking.

EXT. CALIFORNIA

Justin and Hottie walk to each other.

INT. BABYLON

Brian coming.

CUT TO: INT. LINDSAY AND MELANIE'S HOUSE - DAY

Close up of a baby girl, JENNY REBECCA, happy and gurgling on her back.

BEN [OS]

She has your big button eyes. And your dimples.

We pull back to see Melanie, Gus, Lindsay, Michael and Ben leaning over a crib. Everyone is happy.

BEN

And your adorable nose.

MICHAEL

Well, she's got one thing of Mel's that I don't have.

LINDSAY

She's so young, it's hard to tell exactly who she looks like.

MELANIE

At this point, she's just a sleep, eat, and poop machine.

MICHAEL

Yeah, but she's our little sleep, eat, and poop machine.

He pulls her blanket up to her chest.

MICHAEL

Sweet dreams, honey bun.

INT. HALLWAY

Ben and Michael lead the way out of the baby's room and down the stairs. Melanie and Lindsay -- holding Gus's hand -- follow.

BEN

Honey bun?

MICHAEL

It's just what my mother used to call me. [to Mel/Linds] Which reminds me, she said to tell you that she's coming by tomorrow to see the baby.

Lindsay looks back at Melanie, both solemn.

MELANIE

Oh. Would you have her call first?

MICHAEL

She's not pestering you, is she? Cos if she is, just tell me. I hate when she pesters.

They gather at the foot of the stairs. Lindsay swings Gus down to stand in front of her, having carried him.

MICHAEL

Are you sure you guys don't need any groceries? Got enough diapers? What about talcum powder?

Ben and Lindsay laugh.

LINDSAY

We're all set.

MELANIE

We've got everything under control.

BEN

Of course they do. After all these years, they're like a fine-tuned machine. I can't wait to be an old married couple.

LINDSAY

Ohh, don't rush it. It's nice to be newlyweds too.

BEN

How many years has it been?

MELANIE

Two hundred.

LINDSAY

Ten. This week actually.

MICHAEL

Ten's a biggie. You plan anything special?

MELANIE

We're taking a pass this year.

LINDSAY

Too tired, too busy.

Ben moves in for hugs and kisses from them.

MICHAEL

Just remember, if there's anything you need...

He kisses Melanie; she laughs.

MELANIE

When your t*ts start lactating, [phone mime] call me.

They laugh. Ben opens the door, waving. Michael follows.

BEN

[to Gus] Bye!

LINDSAY/MELANIE

Bye!

Melanie shuts the door, Lindsay beside her. They lean against it. Smiles vanish, shoulders slump. Long beat.

MELANIE

You were good.

LINDSAY

So were you.

MELANIE

Practice makes perfect.

Lindsay gets Gus's jacket off the hook behind her, then picks him up. Melanie helps Gus put it on.

LINDSAY

But we're going to have to tell them eventually. They have to know I'm not living here.

MELANIE

Of course they need to know. And they will. Eventually.

Melanie opens the door for Lindsay to leave. Alone, she leans against the door, eyes closed.

CUT TO: EXT. DEB'S HOUSE - NIGHT

A car drives up to the curb.

DEB [VO]

I just want to grab some pantyhose and my lasagna pan.

Carl and Deb get out. Carl walks around to join her on the sidewalk.

CARL

I don't think I can help you with the pantyhose, but don't I have enough pans at my house?

DEB

What, that old collection of TV dinner tins?

Carl chuckles. They walk up to the house.

DEB

Speaking of collections, I gotta remember to bring my glass clowns.

Carl rounds on her, hand held up.

CARL

Wait! You just brought over all those owls, with all those ... eyes.

Deb chuckles.

CARL

With all this stuff you've been hauling over, we might as well be living here.

Beat.

DEB

Carl.

CARL

What?

DEB

Jeez. I don't know how to say this.

CARL

[shocked] You? Not know how to say something?

She chuckles. Beat.

DEB

It's about your place.

CARL

What's the matter with my place?

DEB

Nothing. No no, nothing's the matter with your place. [beat] It's just ... It's not this place.

CARL

We've had endless discussions about where we were gonna live. You, you said you didn't want to be here. There were too many sad memories.

DEB

It's true, and at the time, all I could think about was losing Vic. But since I've been gone, all the happy memories are starting to come back and they're even beating out the sad ones. [beat] I've lived in this house almost thirty years. That's practically all of Michael's life. There were days when we could barely muster up the mortgage and... and days when we partied all night long and that didn't even count birthdays and holidays.

They laugh fondly.

DEB

This house is a part of me. And I've never been away from it until now. There's nothing, nothing wrong with your place, sweetheart, I love being there with you. But I wanna come home.

CARL

Honey. It's like I said from the start. It's up to you. Wherever you are is home to me.

DEB

Really? Really?!

She kisses him and he chuckles, hugging her.

DEB

Thank you!

INT. DEB'S HOUSE

The door opens and Deb and Carl walk in to find Emmett getting f*cked quite vocally on the couch by a trick.

EMMETT

Oh, yeah! f*ck me like you mean it, come on! Ahhhh!

Deb and Carl watch, shell-shocked. Emmett and Trick come and fall over on the couch. Behind them, porn is on the TV. A lamp breaks. Recovering, Emmett then Trick peek up over the couch back. Deb smiles at an open-mouthed Carl.

DEB

Welcome home.

CUT TO: INT. MICHAEL AND BEN'S BUILDING - NIGHT

Michael and Ben walk up the stairs. Michael's carrying a giant giraffe with a red bow on its head, Ben has two plastic bags.

BEN

Ya know, every time you see a stuffed animal, you don't have to buy it.

MICHAEL

I can't help it. I want my girl to have everything.

Ben laughs. Two twinks are making out in the hall, blocking their way.

BEN

Ex-cuse us.

They move aside, giving him a dirty look. Ben and Michael skirt around.

BEN

What are they giving me a look for? [to the departing guys] This isn't a f*cking backroom!

MICHAEL

The party has been going on since last night.

The door next to Michael opens and two guys come out, leaving the door open. Michael pokes his head in. We see a guy smoking a joint.

BEN

[disapproving] Michael!

Michael pulls his head back out as Ben uses his keys to unlock their door.

MICHAEL

Just curious. f*gs packed to the rafters. One of 'em looks just like--

Hunter strolls out of the party.

HUNTER

Hey, dudes, you're home.

Opens their door.

MICHAEL

Why aren't you?

INT. MICHAEL AND BEN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Door swings open and they all walk in.

HUNTER

Jason and Troy asked me if we had the new Christina Aguilera CD. So I loaned 'em ours.

Ben closes the door. Michael drops the giraffe to the side.

MICHAEL

That'll be the last we see of that, thank you very much.

BEN

You don't belong over there with guys who've been partying all night.

HUNTER

I was just trying to be neighborly. And maybe cop a little weed.

Michael points further into the apartment.

MICHAEL

You should be studying for your midterms!

BEN

Crack those books, pal.

He goes to the kitchen. Mouth open, Hunter walks away.

INT. KITCHEN

Ben sets his keys then the bags on the counter. Behind him, Michael opens the fridge.

MICHAEL

Here, give me the ice cream. I'll put it in the freezer.

Ben hands him Haagen-Daz. He unloads the rest of the groceries.

MICHAEL

They seem kinda ... cranky to you?

BEN

Who?

MICHAEL

Mel and Linds.

BEN

No more than usual.

Hands Michael two cartons to put away: one regular milk, one Silk.

BEN

I mean, they're both probably exhausted.

MICHAEL

They must be, to not want to celebrate their tenth anniversary.

Closes the fridge.

BEN

Between breastfeeding and changing diapers, I'm sure planning a celebration is the last thought on their minds.

MICHAEL

Maybe we should think of it for them.

Ben's face softens and he holds Michael from behind, nuzzling his head.

BEN

I hope on our tenth anniversary we're not too tired to celebrate.

Grinning, Michael turns in his arms.

MICHAEL

I seriously doubt that would ever happen.

They kiss. It deepens as Hunter enters.

HUNTER

Hey. I thought when you got married you f*cked less.

Ben opens his mouth. Hunter hunt and gathers the Captain Crunch from a grocery bag then leaves. Ben goes to say something, but Michael kisses him.

CUT TO: INT. KINNETIK ADVERTISING AGENCY - DAY

Brian's office. The conference table: Two coffee pitchers, plate of pastries, four white mugs on a matching tray, red napkins, white notepad with pen, small stack of glossy black folders. Brian stands at the table, looking at a plane ticket he's holding. He folds it back up and walks to his desk as Ted enters, stopping at the pastry plate. Beyond the door, the sounds of Kinnetik running smoothly.

TED

You counting down the hours, Bri?

He grabs a bear claw and tears off half to eat.

TED

I'd be too, you lucky b*stard. Zooming off to Los Angeles for a little Sunshine.

Chuckle and a big bite. Brian, hands in pockets, strolls over.

TED

[mouth full] But, mmm, before you fly away, we need to go over some figures.

He wipes his mouth on a napkin, picking up a legal notepad and writes.

BRIAN

How many bear claws you've consumed this morning?

Frowning, he tosses Ted's untouched bear claw half back onto the plate.

TED

I'm writing down a number.

BRIAN

Oh, I get it, I'm supposed to guess what it is? Then what, we become the new Siegfried and Roy?

Grinning smugly, Ted turns the pad for Brian to see. Brian gives a questioning look.

TED

That's how much Kinnetik made last quarter.

Brian snatches the notepad and stares at it.

BRIAN

That's not too shabby.

TED

Not too shabby?! For being in business a year, it's over the f*cking moon!

He leans over to lust after the bear claws again.

TED

So, what do you plan to do with it?

Brian slides the plate toward him.

BRIAN

Oh. It's all yours.

They laugh. Ted lightly smacks Brian's forearm.

TED

I meant the profits.

He picks up the folders and walks around the table, placing a folder at each seat.

TED

Of course, you could always pump it back into the business, but, ah, I'd caution you against expanding too quickly.

Brian gestures toward Ted's middle.

BRIAN

I might say the same thing to you.

TED

As far as stocks and bonds, eh. To get a good rate, you'd have to go out to the middle of the 24th century.

BRIAN

So what do you suggest?

Ted comes to stop in front of Brian.

TED

The best investment there is.

He smacks Brian's upper chest.

TED

Yourself.

Another smack.

TED

Spend it on you! You've worked like a son of a b*tch, you went through hell and back with your, uh...

Waves his fingers at Brian's crotch, then quickly holds his hands up.

TED

But thank god, you're okay. So, treat yourself to something special. Go buy a new toy.

BRIAN

Got dildos up the a*s.

Brian heads back to this desk. Ted follows.

TED

I mean that little extravagance you thought you could never afford. Like, uh, shiny red Ferrari, or perhaps a, a Warhol to hang in the loft.

Brian sits at his desk, slipping the airplane ticket into the top drawer.

TED

Or, uh, how about something for Justin? Like, uh, his own personal Learjet so he can wing back and forth from the coast to visit you?

Brian takes the teasing with a smirk and Ted heads back to the pastries.

TED [OS]

Well, I'm sure you'll come up with something to delight yourself with.

Pastry nibbling.

TED

Umm.

Brian stares at his computer.

CUT TO: INT. ELI AND MONTY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

We follow ELI, holding a dish of olives, from the hallway into the living room to find Michael and Ben standing, looking at a photo album.

BEN

Oh god, they're so cute!

Eli finishes making their Martinis at the bar.

ELI

I'm Devon's biological father and Monty's Ondine's bio dad. Same mom, however. It was important to us that they be related.

MONTY comes in from the hall.

MONTY

Finally got the kids down. I had to sing Under the Sea six times.

BEN

[laughing] Oh h* h*!

Eli hands out the drinks.

ELI

You do perform it brilliantly.

MICHAEL

Your kids are so adorable.

BEN

Yeah.

MONTY

Aw, thanks. Eli tells me you just had one of your own.

He sits in a chair. Eli sits nearby.

MICHAEL

Jenny Rebecca. Um, but we call her J.R.

He and Ben sit on the couch.

MONTY

[laughing] I love that!

MICHAEL

But we're not parenting like you.

BEN

No. Melanie and Lindsay, our l*sbian friends, are the primary parents.

MONTY

Well, if you do ever decide to raise one of your own, this is the perfect neighborhood to do it. We have a huge backyard.

ELI

There's a Gymboree down the block.

MONTY

And they're even putting in a Baby Gap.

BEN

Ooh.

MICHAEL

It's funny. When I was a kid, we weren't even allowed to come over here. It was too dangerous.

MONTY

Now the only danger's if they run out of wasabi peas at Whole Foods.

They all chuckle.

BEN

Yeah, leave it to the q*eers to turn dross into gold.

MONTY

That's no fairy tale! Ever since the gays moved in, fixing things up, real estate prices have soared.

ELI

You guys ever think about moving?

Ben and Michael stare.

CUT TO: EXT. LIBERTY AVENUE - NIGHT

Busy night. A drag queen hugs a friend.

DRAG QUEEN

Hi! Oh my god, you look fabulous!

Michael and Ben move through the crowd.

BEN

[to a group of guys] Excuse me, pardon me. [to Michael] It's like a different world, isn't it? Between here and where Eli and Monty live?

MICHAEL

Hmn. You want to stop in for a drink?

BEN

Oh, I got a lecture to prepare.

Michael nods in understanding.

BEN

Soo, how'd you like their house?

MICHAEL

They did a great job.

BEN

Yeah.

MICHAEL

It's amazing how much that neighborhood has changed.

Looking down as they walk, Ben makes an 'ew, gross' sound and Michael looks too.

BEN

Wish this one would.

MICHAEL

What's a used condom or two.

BEN

Besides, the apartment is too small for the three of us. And that building is like a g*y dorm.

MICHAEL

It's not that bad.

BEN

Not if you're twenty-four and want to f*ck everything that moves. Or Brian. We're past all that, aren't we?

MICHAEL

Sure.

BEN

So, uh, whatta ya think about getting a place of our own?

MICHAEL

You really want to move...

BEN

Why not? I bet between the two of us, we can afford it.

MICHAEL

Maybe so, but this is where we live. Where I've lived my whole life. I don't know if I want to pick up and leave just like that.

BEN

[disappointed] Was just a thought.

CUT TO: INT. RIPT GYM - DAY

Emmett, water bottle in hand, reads a flyer tacked to the announcement board. Ted is beside him, eating a power bar.

EMMETT

Charming, spacious apartment to share, own bedroom, private bath, no pets, bottoms only need apply. Perfect.

He tears off a phone number.

TED

So who asked you to leave, Deb or Horvath?

EMMETT

Mm, neither. They didn't have to.

TED

Look on their faces must have been priceless when they found you entertaining.

EMMETT

Deb wanted to watch and have a Q&A afterwards.

Ted laughs.

TED

No doubt. What about Horvath?

EMMETT

Did you ever see The Blob?

TED

Mm-hm.

EMMETT

Remember the look on the old farmer's face just before it devoured him?

Ted makes a freaked-out face.

TED

ARGH!

EMMETT

Mm-hmm. So I've decided to spare everyone the discomfort of going through another embarrassing scene, quietly fold my tent and move on.

Ted nods. They walk back to the machines as Ted opens another power bar.

EMMETT

Teddy, how many of those power bars have you had?

TED

Who's counting?

EMMETT

I am. And that's your fourth.

Ted sits on a weight bench and shrugs.

EMMETT

Do you know the number of carbs in those things, not to mention the calories?

TED

So I'll burn 'em off.

EMMETT

Honey, you'd have to go up in flames.

Ted frowns and looks down at the power bar. Emmett crouches down.

EMMETT

Look I, I know you don't want to hear this so, please, please promise me you won't take it the wrong way. But as your friend I feel it's my obligation to tell you you're getting a little, um...

TED

A little what?

EMMETT

A little ... hardy. I mean, uh, ro-robust. I mean--

Brian swings into the frame.

BRIAN

Fat.

He pats Ted's middle.

TED

Fat? Wh--you think I'm fat?!

Emmett stands, looking uncomfortable.

BRIAN

Well, let's put it this way: If you start singing, it's all over.

TED

I'll have you know, I'm not fat, I'm just, I'm bulking up.

Brian and Emmett share a look.

TED

I was a shadow of my former self when I was on crystal and I shed quite a few pounds during the Liberty Ride. And I happen to think I look pretty damned good.

He takes a bite of the power bar as a blond gym twinkie, GARY, cruises him.

TED

And obviously, so does he.

Ted grins. He stands to follow, giving Brian and Emmett a smug gesture on his way.

EMMETT

Who knew you could catch twinkies by stuffing them in your mouth?

In the distance, Ted approaches Gary.

TED

Hey.

GARY

Hey.

TED

How are ya?

A gym bunny starts working on the machine Ted vacated.

EMMETT

All right, I'm off to find new digs.

He waves his towel at Brian's face.

EMMETT

Ta!

Brian snaps his towel toward Emmett just as Michael walks by, touching Brian's back in greeting. Brian swats his arm to get him to stop walking.

BRIAN

Hey. Shall we take a peek in the steam room and see what's lurking in the mist?

MICHAEL

Can't. Brett's calling from L.A., wants my input on a couple of story points for the screenplay. Ya know, stuff Rage might say.

Brian smirks at the Gym Bunny.

BRIAN

Zowy, Zephyr, check out that super c*ck.

He and Michael grin.

MICHAEL

Something like that.

Brian gives a low chuckle. They start walking.

MICHAEL

Besides, I thought you had a plane to catch. Justin's going to be so excited when you show up.

Brian drapes his towel over a guy's dumbbell bar as they pass.

BRIAN

I'm not going.

Michael stops and stares.

BRIAN

Trip's cancelled.

He strips his tank top off.

MICHAEL

But I thought you had all these plans to surprise him.

BRIAN

Well, I guess the surprise is there's not gonna be one.

He walks off screen, Michael following.

CUT TO: RAGE STORYBOARDS

Swineheart in a church, well-dressed men and women flocked around. He stands at a pulpit, arms raised with a bible in his hands. Behind him are two crosses and a symbol. The symbol, using the "S" for Swineheart, closely resembles a swastika.

ART DIRECTION: "Push in" inside arrows on each side of the frame.

STORYBOARDS: The enthralled audience as Swineheart preaches.

COMIC BOOK NARRATOR [VO]

Reverend Swineheart, Rage's nemesis and sworn enemy of q*eers everywhere, preaches his message of hate from his pulpit...

STORYBOARD: Bright orange flames rise up to engulf the screen.

STORYBOARD: Stone cave where Rage, bound, hangs upside down over a fire pit.

COMIC BOOK NARRATOR [VO]

...while deep in the catacombs of the church...

STORYBOARD: Shrinks to the same Rage storyboard with art direction.

ART DIRECTION: Use fire wipe from prev. scene.

COMIC BOOK NARRATOR [VO]

...Rage hangs suspended above the flames...

STORYBOARD: Back view of Rage over the fire.

ART DIRECTION: F.G. rock pans in. Push in.

COMIC BOOK NARRATOR [VO]

...his hands bound in really hot leather restraints...

STORYBOARD: Close-up of Rage.

ART DIRECTION: Push in-circled.

STORYBOARD: Arial shot of J.T. running down a hall.

ART DIRECTION: Panel 8. Rage: Scene 52. Track. Cut J.T. racing down the hall charges to the rescue.

COMIC BOOK NARRATOR [VO]

Meanwhile, J.T. races to the rescue.

STORYBOARD: Close-up of J.T. running.

ART DIRECTION: Cut. To show J.T.

STORYBOARD: Close-up of J.T. drawing.

ART DIRECTION: Rage: Scene 54. Cut. To C.U. J.T. running

DISSOLVE TO: INT. CALIFORNIA - DAY

J.T. becomes Justin. The action melts into Justin at his desk in the production studio. The wall behind him is covered with Rage misc. He's intent on drawing when an EMPLOYEE walks into the office and heads straight to Justin.

EMPLOYEE

Mr. Keller says they need the storyboards for the catacomb sequence now-now-now.

JUSTIN

Tell him I'm hurrying as fast as I can-can-can.

She grins. He gathers up the sheet he's drawing on plus several more sitting to his right and hands them over.

JUSTIN

Pray my hand holds out.

She rushes out just as Brett strolls in and heads toward Justin.

BRETT

You look all out of breath.

Justin lets out a laughed breath.

JUSTIN

I'm just trying to finish these storyboards for a certain demanding tyrant.

BRETT

Those? Forget it. I've got incredible news.

Justin turns to him.

BRETT

And other than a legion of studio executives, agents, publicists, managers and both trade papers, you are the very first to hear it. We just signed someone to play Rage.

JUSTIN

Who? Who!

BRETT

This is the movies. Instead of telling you, I'll show you.

Brett steps aside and we see CONNOR JAMES appear at the door. Justin matches his grin as Connor walks over.

JUSTIN

Connor.

CONNOR

Hey, man.

JUSTIN

Where have you been?

They shake hands.

BRETT

Oh, he's just back from doing a Kabuki version of Much Ado off-off-off-OFF..

Connor elbows him and he grunts.

BRETT

...Broadway.

CONNOR

What a change from working with those Hollywood hacks who aspire to nothing more than mediocrity.

BRETT

And still you don't have any problem picking up that paycheck, do you?

Connor laughs.

BRETT

Well, get ready to do some serious acting. We start flying lessons on Monday.

He moves away to an art table. Connor moves closer to Justin.

JUSTIN

I thought you turned down the part.

CONNOR

Oh, the director convinced me it'd be good for my career. Show everyone I'm a straight guy who has no problems playing g*y for pay.

Behind them, Brett cackles then walks out. Justin doesn't look all that thrilled.

CUT TO: INT. MICHAEL AND BEN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Kitchen. Emmett pointing out to Michael various dishes on the counter/stove.

EMMETT

All riiight. Stuffed eggplant, Caprese salad, humus, and the piece de resistance...

He turns with a full platter.

EMMETT

...fried chicken which is not really fried but baked to make it taste like fried so nobody feels guilty.

MICHAEL

Mel and Linds are gonna go outta their minds when we show up. I can't thank you enough for all of this, Em.

EMMETT

My pleasure, sweetie.

He turns to stare down at a casserole on the stove, pointing.

EMMETT

What's this?

BEN

Oh, casserole I made to take along. Millet, leeks and soy cheese.

EMMETT

Are you sure you're not a l*sbian?

Ben moves around him to get a box of bags. They bump into each other.

EMMETT

Whoopsie.

He moves to get the chicken.

BEN

Kitchen's so tiny, you can barely turn around.

Emmett hip-checks Ben, laughing.

EMMETT

Care to dance?

Only he and Michael laugh. Emmett puts the chicken in the fridge.

EMMETT

Which isn't too much of a stretch, considering Baby Babylon blasting across the way.

BEN

Tell me about it.

Walks away. Michael watches knowingly.

EMMETT

Why are his firm, manly t*ts in a twist?

MICHAEL

He thinks the building's turning into a den of iniquity. Sex, drugs, cruising.

EMMETT

Okay, so those are the advantages. What are the liabilities?

MICHAEL

That basically we've outgrown this place.

EMMETT

Well, let's face it, honey, you are Sadie, Sadie, married lady. With the hubby and piglets to prove it. I, on the other hand, remain wantonly single. So if you're moving out, maybe I should move back in.

MICHAEL

We're not moving.

INT. FRONT DOOR

Ben opens it to poke his head out. The hall is filled with young guys milling around, drinking and talking. Ben calls over his shoulder.

BEN

Would you look at this?

Emmett and Michael join him from the kitchen.

BEN

[raises voice out the hall] It's like h*m* central!

GUY [OS]

Bite me!

Michael laughs, Emmett pokes his head out curiously.

MICHAEL

Calm down. They're just young and having fun. You were that age once, remember?

BEN

That's exactly the point. We're not that age anymore. It's time to move to a house, on a street like Eli and Monty.

MICHAEL

Buying a house is not like buying a CD or a sweater. Even if we did decide to do it, first we'd have to review our finances, check out the numbers. Right, Em?

Emmett turns from checking out the hotties in the hall.

EMMETT

Oh, I'd say checking out the numbers is essential.

Grinning, he leaves, closing the door behind him.
CUT TO: EXT. DOWNTOWN - DAY

Brian and Michael walking side by side along the storefronts.

BRIAN

Hmn, trying to dispose of a large sum of expendable income is more exhausting than one might think.

MICHAEL

Whoever said the world was fair. Next time you'll think twice before becoming a success.

Brian wraps his left arm around Michael's shoulders.

BRIAN

Well, you're not doing so bad yourself.

Michael shrugs.

MICHAEL

Ben wants us to buy a house in that new area where all the g*y couples are moving.

Brian makes a face.

BRIAN

Ohh, and become Stepford f*gs?

MICHAEL

Maybe you should get a new place. House in the country.

BRIAN

I hate the f*cking country.

MICHAEL

A yacht?

BRIAN

[laughs] Right. Pittsburgh: The New St. Tropez.

He stops to look into a Knoll furniture storefront. Michael stops and waits.

MICHAEL

Ride on the space shuttle?

BRIAN

I'm a tad shy of twenty mill.

They resume walking.

MICHAEL

Then how about a bottle of wine for Mel and Linds's anniversary bash?

BRIAN

Who says I'll be there?

MICHAEL

Well, I figured since you'd canceled your trip.

He shrugs.

BRIAN

Ahh, doesn't mean I'm gonna be raising a glass to their marathon muffathon.

Michael grins. They turn a corner. Seeing a top line red/black motorcycle in a store display, Brian stops and points.

BRIAN

That. Is a distinct possibility.

Hands in pockets as he stares at it.

Camera shifts to the motorcycle's POV as we look out on B/M through the glass.

MICHAEL

Hmn.

Brian squints at a thought.

BRIAN

Can you imagine eating p*ssy -- the same p*ssy -- for ten years?

He shudders a "yuck" face.

MICHAEL

No, but I don't suppose they could fathom sucking the same c*ck.

BRIAN

That makes three of us.

Michael side-eyes him.

MICHAEL

Unless it's Justin's.

Camera POV back to normal.

Brian pauses, then squints at Michael. Michael smirks back, then shrugs.

MICHAEL

It's a shame you couldn't go to L.A.

Brian looks away, shrugs.

BRIAN

I'm busy. And he's busy.

MICHAEL

We're all busy. I just hope he gets back soon so we can finish the next issue of Rage.

BRIAN

He's not coming back.

MICHAEL

What do you mean, he's not coming back? Did he tell you that?

BRIAN

He didn't have to.

MICHAEL

When I spoke to him, all he said was that he was going to have to be there longer than he--

BRIAN

Listen, Mikey. Are you listening?

MICHAEL

[exasperated] Yes! Christ sake, I'm listening.

BRIAN

Just figure it out for yourself. I mean, first it's three months, then it's six months. One project turns into another and another. Before you know it, he's there a year. Five years.

CUT TO: INT. CALIFORNIA - DAY

Bedroom. Justin getting f*cked by Connor doggie style. We mainly only hear Justin's moans and gasps.

JUSTIN

[under his breath] Oh, yeah...

CUT TO: EXT. DOWNTOWN - DAY

We see Brian and Michael's reflections in the store window. Brian shrugs.

BRIAN

It's the way it goes.

CUT TO: INT. CALIFORNIA - DAY

More f*cking. Connor holding onto Justin's hips. Justin rearing up, gasping and reaching back to hold on as Connor bands an arm over Justin's shoulder and across his chest.

CUT TO: EXT. DOWNTOWN - DAY

Justin's moans bleed over. We hear them in the background as Brian talks.

BRIAN

I mean, I don't blame him. He's having the time of his life, working in the movies. He's f*cking movie stars.

CUT TO: INT. CALIFORNIA - DAY

Still f*cking. Justin buries his head in the blankets, rears up and comes as the camera slides to the left.

CUT TO: EXT. DOWNTOWN - DAY

Brian staring into the window. He purses his lips, looking sad. We can still hear Justin and Connor panting.

MICHAEL [OS]

That doesn't mean he's never coming home.

BRIAN

Who the hell'd come back to Pittsburgh after L.A.? I mean, if it was me, I'd never come back.

Camera POV back to normal.

Long beat. Traffic sounds, a siren. Michael rolls his eyes.

MICHAEL

He's not you.

Brian stands still a moment longer. Finally rolls his lips in and mentally brings himself back. After a small shrug and dismissing sound, he looks at Michael.

BRIAN

Well. It's time he got on with his life.

Crosses in front of Michael as he resumes walking.

BRIAN

It's time I got on with mine.

Looking unsettled, Michael stares after him for a few seconds before following.

CUT TO: INT. LINDSAY AND MELANIE'S HOUSE - DAY

Melanie, holding J.R., walks through the dining room.

MELANIE

Can't believe how someone so little could have so much poop in them. You just might grow up to be a lawyer.

She's heading up the stairs when a knock on the door has her turning to answer it.

EXT. HOUSE

Michael at the door, knocking.

Melanie opens the door. Michael is leaning against the frame, grinning.

MICHAEL

Hey, Mel.

MELANIE

Hey ... Michael.

MICHAEL

Whatcha up to?

Melanie starts bouncing J.R.

MELANIE

Changing you-know-whose you-know-what for the billionth time today.

MICHAEL

Is that how you're going to spend your tenth anniversary?

MELANIE

You got a better idea?

Michael's grin gets wider.

MICHAEL

As a matter of fact...

He moves inside just as the whole family, Deb in the lead with a Jell-O mold, rushes into view. It sounds like a stampede on the porch.

EVERYBODY

Surprise!

Melanie gapes, definitely surprised. Everyone laughs and moves into the house, carrying food, balloons, flowers.

DEB

Surprise!

She sees J.R. and quickly hands the Jell-O mold off to Carl. She and Michael fuss over J.R.

DEB

Ohh, how's my granddaughter?

Deb takes her from Melanie.

DEB

I haven't seen you forever.

MELANIE

Well, yeah, not since this morning.

DEB

[to J.R.] I scared you, Sweetheart.

Deb walks away, wiping J.R.'s cheek, as Emmett comes forward with a plate of food.

EMMETT

Wipe the d*ke in the headlights look off your face. You are having a surprise party, courtesy of Auntie Em's Special Occasions.

Ben's next up, holding his casserole.

BEN

And you don't have to lift a finger, everything's been taken care of!

Ben, Ted and Gary hurry by.

GUEST [OS]

Hey, Happy Tenth, Mel!

Guests flood in while Melanie watches, stunned. Emmett's waving guests in the door.

EMMETT

Food in the dining room, please!

MICHAEL

[to Melanie] Where's Linds?

MELANIE

Ahhh... She went to the grocery store. With Gus.

MICHAEL

We want to surprise her, too.

MELANIE

[shaky laugh] Oh, she'll be surprised. Would you excuse me for a sec?

MICHAEL

[nods] Uh-huh.

The door finally gets closed and Michael follows the stampede with a huge grin.

INT. BEDROOM

Melanie quickly slips in and closes the door, muffling the party sounds from below. Rushes to the phone on the dresser and punches in a number. We watch in the mirror as she dials and paces.

LINDSAY

[on the phone] Hello?

MELANIE

Hey, it's me.

LINDSAY

Is something wrong?

MELANIE

Yeah, f*cking right something's wrong!

LINDSAY

With the baby?

MELANIE

No, [sigh] no, it's not with the baby. It just... Get your a*s over here quick!

LINDSAY

Why?

MELANIE

They're giving us a f*cking surprise party.

Close up on the dresser mirror. Two photos: Melanie, Lindsay holding newborn Gus, and Brian sitting on the hospital bed. The second is infant J.R. half under a blanket.

INT. DINING ROOM

People milling around, glasses of wine in hand. We spot Ted and Michael at the buffet. In profile, we can see Ted has a sizeable belly. Looking tense, Melanie stands behind them, eating and warily watching the guests.

TED

Well, Emmett's done it again. The food's great.

Gary offers Ted some food.

TED

Aww, I couldn't...

Michael turns around to Melanie.

MICHAEL

She must be really stocking up.

Pops food in his mouth.

TED

[to Gary] Really? It's for me?

MELANIE

Well, you know. Double coupons.

Walks away, licking her fingers.

Gary feeding Ted. Ted moans orgasmically. Emmett eyes them briefly as he attends the food.

TED

[mouth full] Mmm, mmm, that's good.

We follow Emmett into the living room where Deb is studying Ted. Em sets the food down on the coffee table.

DEB

Is Teddy getting tubby?

Em follows her gaze.

EMMETT

Hmph.

Shot of Ted and Gary at the buffet.

EMMETT

Considering the adorableness of his new beau, I'd say fat's the new thin.

Eats a finger sandwich.

DEB

So where you been keeping yourself? I barely see you since I've moved back.

EMMETT

Um, actually I've been out looking for a place.

DEB

A place? For what?

EMMETT

To... live.

Deb's smile vanishes.

DEB

Why the hell would you do that? It's not because we walked in and found you f*cking some guy. Is it?

EMMETT

Well...

DEB

[laughing] That was just a case of bad timing, that's all. I mean, it's kind of funny actually, when you think about it.

EMMETT

I'm not sure that Carl found it to be...

Shot of Carl and Michael talking/laughing and doing some manly arm squeezing.

EMMETT [OS]

...the laugh riot you did.

DEB

Don't worry about Carl. He'll get used to it.

EMMETT

He shouldn't have to. The house should be the two of yours, Deb. Not the three of ours.

DEB

But, he'll never be Blanche when I'm playing Baby Jane. He doesn't have the shoulders or the eyebrows. C'mon, you think he's gonna take me to Sing Along With Wizard Of Oz, or get dishy with me during the award shows, or pull my face back and tell me how much work I need? In other words... Em. You're irreplaceable.

Em has been smiling fondly the whole time. Now his smile fades.

EMMETT

We both have to face it, Deb. Life with your detective does not include me.

He walks away, leaving a crushed Deb.

INT. FRONT DOOR

Melanie pacing. The door opens; it's Lindsay holding Gus. Melanie pounces forward.

MELANIE

What the hell took you so long?

Lindsay closes the door.

GUS

Hi, mommy.

Melanie half-waves at him, distracted.

LINDSAY

I had to wake up Gus, get dressed.

Melanie waves it away and quickly leads them out to the party.

MELANIE

Here she is!

Shot of the living room as guests look over.

BEN

Oh, hey!

EVERYONE

Surprise!

Shot of the dining room as Ted, Gary and Em clap and move closer.

Lindsay feigns surprise as she puts Gus down. Melanie sweeps an arm across the room, then throws her other one around Lindsay's shoulders. She grins tightly.

MELANIE

Isn't that great, our friends throwing us a surprise party for our anniversary?

BEN

Where are the groceries?

LINDSAY

The groceries...? Oh oh, they're being delivered tomorrow!

Ben and Michael nod.

BEN

Oh.

Emmett swoops in.

EMMETT

Does everyone have champagne?

He hands a glass to a flustered Lindsay. Melanie tries to wave that off as well, but Emmett quickly goes in search of another glass.

EMMETT

Oh, can't toast without a glaaass...

Shot of all the guests holding their glasses, happy and waiting.

BEN

We know how exhausted you two are.

Shot of Melanie and Lindsay looking nervous.

BEN [OS]

We couldn't let this landmark go by without a liiiittle celebration.

Michael is nodding wildly.

MICHAEL

Ten years is quite an achievement.

DEB

[laughs] I'll say.

Emmett ducks in to hand Melanie her glass, who keeps her eyes on the guests. Lindsay cuts her eyes to Mel knowingly.

BEN [OS]

Now, more than ever, it's important people know that a g*y couple can be just as committed as any straight couple.

The guests agree. Michael raises his glass.

MICHAEL

To Mel and Linds!

Melanie raises her glass -- orange juice in a regular glass.

EVERYONE

To Mel and Linds!

DEB

Speech from the old married couple, c'mon!

LINDSAY

There is something we'd like to say...

Melanie whips around to Linds.

MELANIE

No, there isn't. [lower] Now is not the right time.

LINDSAY

When is the right time?

Michael leans in innocently.

MICHAEL

Right time for what?

They look at him. Beat.

LINDSAY

[to guests] I think you all should know--

MELANIE

How much we appreciate this.

LINDSAY

[snaps] Would you stop?

The guests grow quiet, uncomfortable. Shot of Deb/Carl staring.

LINDSAY

[to Mel] We can't hide it anymore, it isn't fair.

Shot of Michael/Ben then Ted/Gary/Em, all quiet. Lindsay turns back to the crowd.

LINDSAY

Thank you for all your good wishes. But you see, Melanie and I are having some problems.

Melanie snorts.

MELANIE

[to crowd] I wasn't having any problems. I - I was trying to have a baby.

LINDSAY

[to Mel] All right, I'm the one, I'm the one responsible for all the problems.

MELANIE

Damn right you are!

LINDSAY

For which I've apologized endlessly. But you still refuse to accept the fact--

MELANIE

That f*cking Sam Auerbach had nothing to do with sex?!

The guest start to murmur.

MELANIE

It was all about art. All the humping was about form and function.

She shakes her head, disgusted.

Shot of the guests, stunned.

LINDSAY

[to guests] The truth is, we haven't been living together since our daughter was born.

Everyone further stunned. Lindsay turns and walks to the stairs. Michael lowers his head, trying to process.

CUT TO: INT. BABYLON - NIGHT

Backroom. Pretty boys f*cking montage to a club beat. Close-up of Brian standing against the wall, getting sucked. Suddenly the house lights go up, the music cuts off. Brian squints, looking around.

GUY #1 [OS]

Who turned on the lights?!

Aerial shot of the room. Black walls, dirty floor, neon pink "X" on the hallway wall, fourteen guys in the shot, including Brian. Everyone but the trick sucking Brian stops to look around.

GUY #2

What the f*ck's going on?

GUY #3

Turn 'em off!

GUY #4 [OS]

f*ck!

Brian looks around, frowning.

GUY #5 [OS]

Turn the f*cking lights back off!

GUY #6 [OS]

Jesus Christ!

GUY #7 [OS]

That's not funny. Not f*cking funny.

More grumbling. We pull back to see Brian, holding his trick by the head, enjoying his blowjob. Two police officers stride into the room.

OFFICER #1

Gentlemen!

The guys turn to look.

OFFICER #1 [OS]

May I have your attention.

GUY #8 [OS]

Aw, man.

Brian looks at the officers, still getting blown.

OFFICER #1

This club is officially closed.

Some guys scurry to get clothes, others don't bother redressing as they file out. Brian and his trick keep on sucking.

OFFICER #1

So pull up your pants and go home.

OFFICER #2

Let's go, come on. Come on!

GUY #9 [OS]

That's my shirt...

OFFICER #2

Let's go. Everybody. Party's over, let's go.

OFFICER #1

[to Brian] That includes you.

BRIAN

[breathless] Just wait a sec.

A few seconds of panting and he comes. The officer shakes his head but looks away. Another few seconds to catch his breath and retuck himself then Brian grins widely.

BRIAN

Thanks, Officer. I'll do the same for you one day.

He leaves, the officer watching him go.

CUT TO: INT. LINDSAY AND MELANIE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Dining room. Melanie, Lindsay and Ben sit at the table. Michael slowly paces to the doorway. There's an uncomfortable silence.

LINDSAY

I come here every day to be with the baby.

MELANIE

And so I can be with Gus.

LINDSAY

Then Gus and I go back to the apartment.

MICHAEL

You have an apartment?

LINDSAY

Yeah, small one bedroom I've been renting.

MELANIE

We've been renting. Although we can barely afford this place.

LINDSAY

[to Melanie] Well, Gus and I have to live somewhere. Or would you rather we sleep on the street?

MELANIE

Did I say that?

BEN

We're just a little thrown. Ya gotta admit -- it's a shock.

LINDSAY

I wanted it all out in the open.

MELANIE

[snaps] Well, I didn't. I'm the one who had the baby. I had enough to deal with without having to explain to everyone.

BEN

Look, you've been having personal problems, we understand--

Michael walks over, upset.

MICHAEL

No, we do not understand! How could you not say a word all this time?

Lindsay lowers her gaze.

MICHAEL

So when were you gonna tell me? After she grew up and went to college and got married and had children of her own?

Melanie rolls her eyes and stands up from the table.

MICHAEL

I have seen you practically every day since Jenny was born and it's always been so sweet, so adorable, the two doting mothers. Well, who woulda guessed it was a big f*cking lie.

LINDSAY

We made a wrong decision by not telling you. For which we are truly sorry. But we've been under a lot of stress.

MELANIE

[catty] Ohh, ain't that the truth. You have no idea how deceit can raise your blood pressure.

Lindsay draws a breath, taking the jab without comment.

MICHAEL

When I agreed to be the baby's father, it was because I knew she would be raised in a loving home with two loving parents. Not in some sort of time-sharing arrangement with complimentary sniping!

Melanie seethes, uncomfortable.

MICHAEL

Now you can make all the excuses you want, but if this is how you plan on raising our daughter, then we should never have had her in the first place!

Long beat as he stares at them, upset. Lindsay is stunned. Michael walks out, leaving Ben at the table.

CUT TO: TED'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Ted and Gary watching T.V. in bed. There's a pizza box between them. Ted, in a gray t-shirt, is eating a slice. Gary, no shirt and no pizza, laughs at the movie.

GARY

God, I love this part.

Ted gives him an amused look.

TED

[mouth full] Frankly, I've, I've never been too keen about the Grumpy Old Men movies.

GARY

I love the classics.

They laugh, Ted pats his cheek.

TED

[scoffs] 'Classics.'

Gary reaches for a pizza slice.

GARY

Here, have another.

TED

[chewing] Nope, no, no, I couldn't.

Wipes his hands on a napkin.

GARY

Come on...

Waves the slice enticingly.

TED

Nope, six is my absolute limit.

GARY

Come on!

Offers the slice again.

TED

[grunting playfully] No!

He grunts like a bull being shown the red cape before finally taking a bite. Gary laughs.

TED

Ya know, at this rate, I'm gonna turn into that guy I saw on T.V. He was so fat they had to remove a wall to get him out of the house.

He pats his tummy.

GARY

Fine by me.

Ted laughs and runs his knuckles over Gary's chest, attention back on the T.V.

GARY

There is something about the scent of an old guy.

Ted squawks at that, but Gary is leaning in to sniff his neck and Ted laughs. Gary pulls back.

GARY

Makes me so hot.

Ted makes an interested sound. Gary touches his hair.

GARY

The lovely gray flecks turning into white...

Unsure now, Ted laughs awkwardly while Gary stares lovingly at his head.

GARY

The baby bottom pink scalp, peeking through the little hairs on top, like wild grass on the beach...

Ted's frowning. Turned on, Gary grabs his c*ck under the covers. Ted jumps, eyes widening.

GARY

And to grab onto those love handles while I'm sh**ting all over that big, full belly...

He grins, seemingly not phased that Ted's giving him a 'What the f*ck?' look, and reaches for another pizza slice.

GARY

Come on, lover.

Shoves the slice's end into Ted's mouth.

GARY

Eat.

Stunned, Ted bites then gives him a 'hi-your-name-is-crazy' smile.

CUT TO: INT. DEB'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Emmett's bent over, looking in the fridge. Off-screen, someone clears their throat, then a shoulder in the frame.

EMMETT

[whispers] Sean, honey, I told you to stay in my room.

We see it's Carl. They're both in just their underwear.

CARL

I'm not Sean, honey.

Emmett turns and chuckles.

EMMETT

Oop.

He hides behind the fridge door. Carl is just as uncomfortable.

EMMETT

Clearly.

CARL

Hand me the cranberry juice.

EMMETT

Yeah.

He turns to get the bottle and hands it over. Carl quickly takes it and promptly holds it in front of his crotch, clearing his throat again and looking away briefly.

CARL

I've been meaning for us to have a ... powwow. Although, I never imagined it to be...

EMMETT

[laughs] Au naturel? Well, you have nothing to worry about. My lust bunny is locked away in my room. Even put a gag in his mouth. Course, it was leather and he begged me to do it.

He laughs, but Carl just stares.

EMMETT

Anyways, uh, starting Sunday, uh, you and Deb will have this place all to yourselves.

Grabs a foam carton from the fridge and closes the door.

EMMETT

Um, uh, buffalo wings?

Goes to the counter. Carl follows.

CARL

Deb is very upset you're leaving.

Emmett gets a plate out of the cupboard.

EMMETT

Up to you now to stop her from buying everything on QVC.

Carl leans against the counter.

CARL

Truth is, I'm a little sorry to see you go myself.

Head down, Emmett's plating up his wings.

EMMETT

You are?

CARL

Is that such a surprise?

EMMETT

Frankly, yes. Most straight men take one look at me and head for the hills. Except for my father. He ran me out on a rail.

CARL

Well, that's his loss. You're a good man. [beat] In fact, considering, uh, the number of hours I work -- sometimes all night -- [sigh] I'd be a hell of a lot happier if I knew Deb wasn't in the house alone.

Emmett grins.

EMMETT

Carl Horvath. You asking me to stay?

Carl laughs.

CARL

Doesn't take a detective to figure that out. But, it's up to you.

EMMETT

Well, what about my sex--my love life?

CARL

I bought a sound machine. All I hear now is raindrops falling, rivers flowing, birds chirping.

EMMETT

Maybe I should get one of those. Pretend I'm f*cking in a rain forest.

They laugh.

EMMETT

Oh, uh, I'd better get back to...

He bites on his finger long-wise, meaning his gagged love bunny.

CARL

Ahh, Sean honey.

Plate in hand, Emmett grins, waves a roll of paper towels at Carl. He starts to leave, but pauses.

EMMETT

Ya know, if, um, if you were g*y, you'd make one hell of a bear.

Flashes Carl the sexy eye and grins. Carl gives him a look. Grinning, Em leaves him to take a slug of his cranberry juice.

CUT TO: INT. LIBERTY AVENUE DINER - DAY

Deb, behind the counter and restocking the dessert display with cinnamon rolls, talks to Michael sitting at the counter.

DEB

I told Melanie -- she was sitting right over there -- I said, Doesn't matter what's going on between you and Lindsay, your first responsibility is that baby.

Michael nods and drinks from a glass bottle. We see a male CUSTOMER sitting next to him with a dinner.

CUSTOMER

Deb, could I get a piece of the key lime?

DEB

When you finish your meatloaf. [to Michael] But did they listen?

She slams down the lid on the dessert display.

MICHAEL

Obviously not.

DEB

Instead they go and destroy a family. They turn a happy home into a broken one.

MICHAEL

Without even telling us.

Brian appears to sit next to Michael. The "order's up" bell from the kitchen sounds off twice.

BRIAN

Coffee to go, Deb.

DEB

Want anything with it?

BRIAN

How could you eat after what happened last night?

MICHAEL

You're telling me! Steam's still coming out of my ears.

The COOK rings the bell a bunch more times.

COOK

Hey, Deb!

Deb turns and points.

DEB

If I hear that f*cking thing one more time, you're gonna be hearing bells!

She pours Brian's coffee.

BRIAN

My heart's broken. My soul? Crushed.

MICHAEL

How do you think I feel?

BRIAN

The insensitivity. You know, it's amoral, that's what it is.

Deb drops his coffee off as she passes by.

MICHAEL

You're telling me.

He drinks.

BRIAN

How could they do this?

Adds sugar to his coffee.

MICHAEL

You were right. Never trust munchers.

Brian frowns.

BRIAN

Munchers?

MICHAEL

Mel and Linds.

BRIAN

What the hell have they got to do with it?

Stirs his coffee with a fork.

MICHAEL

Who do you think's responsible?

BRIAN

For closing Babylon?

Michael's nose twitches.

CUT TO: EXT. AN ALLEY - DAY

Brian and Michael turn off the sidewalk and into an alley. Brian has his coffee cup in his right hand.

MICHAEL

Is that all you care about? Who gives a sh*t if the cops close down Babylon?

BRIAN

I, for one, give a very big sh*t that that come stain Sapperstein was defrauding the Internal Revenue Service by hiding thousands -- perhaps even hundreds of thousands -- of dollars up in his office in pillowcases. Which, knowing him, you can be sure were not the highest thread count. And now because of his ill*gal activities, Babylon is gone. Kaput. Finito.

MICHAEL

And that concerns you more than the fact that Mel and Linds were lying to us? That now my daughter and your son are the products of a broken home.

Brian laughs as they come to the end of the alley and the 'Vette. He leans against the driver side door.

BRIAN

Christ. The three of you. Never saw such drama queens. First Lindsay was wailing to me on the phone the night she and Melanie split and now you.

MICHAEL

[upset] Wait a minute. You telling me you knew about this and you didn't tell me?

BRIAN

[calm] She asked me not to.

Disbelieving, Michael points as he backs up.

MICHAEL

So your loyalty to her was more important than our friendship.

BRIAN

Don't make this about us, Michael. Because it's not.

Michael stares, feeling betrayed. Brian straightens up from the 'Vette and smiles as he raises his coffee cup toast-like.

BRIAN

The ever-changing kaleidoscope of life.

He takes a drink and turns toward the car to go while Michael stares.

CUT TO: ANIMATED RAGE ART

A spacescape drawn in blues with twinkling white stars. J.T., drawn in black and white, floats away from our POV.

COMIC BOOK NARRATOR [VO]

J.T. floats, lost among the stars, wondering if he'll ever see Rage again.

DISSOLVE TO: INT. CALIFORNIA - DAY

The camera slides to the right and we see the J.T. art is on an art studio computer. We pan up to Justin standing at his drawing board, contemplating five sheets of paper (four have typed lines, the fifth has three Rage panels drawn in b/w) that are laid out. Other employees are working at desks and milling about. Same employee from earlier walks over to hand him a sheet of paper. He takes it with a polite smile.

JUSTIN

[quietly] Thank you.

He looks the paper over, itching his left temple. Sets the paper down and pulls out his cell phone. Enters a number when a voice sounds from behind.

CONNOR [OS]

I promised I'd come for you, J.T.

Justin turns and grins when he sees Connor in his Rage costume -- silver spandex with the chest rip and black eye mask.

CONNOR

Even if I had to go to the end of the universe.

Still grinning, Justin snaps his phone closed and turns full around.

CONNOR

I just did a test in front of a green screen.

Justin waves him to do a modeling twirl; Connor does.

CONNOR

So? What do you think?

JUSTIN

It's hot.

CONNOR

And [shimmies shoulders] itchy.

They laugh. Connor looks down at his crotch.

CONNOR

Check out this package.

Justin guffaws.

JUSTIN

That's gonna win an Oscar for special effects.

CONNOR

Didn't hear you complaining.

Having advanced a few steps, Connor playfully pokes him in the stomach several times as a laughing Justin bats his hands away. Behind them, Brett walks in and stops just inside the door.

BRETT

Okay, superhero, turn in your tights. Fenderman just pulled the plug.

CONNOR

What?

JUSTIN

He can't do that.

Brett walks further into the room and picks up some papers off a desk.

BRETT

He can and he did. He just reamed my a*s and not like in scene thirty-two where Rage gives J.T. the rimming of a lifetime. Oh, the picture's over budget, over schedule.

JUSTIN

You said they say that about every picture.

BRETT

They do.

CONNOR

Then what's the real reason?

BRETT

He's afraid. The times, the political climate.

JUSTIN

Well, he's wrong. Tell him there are millions of q*eers out there with billions of dollars.

BRETT

I did. He's more concerned about alienating the family audience. Pissing off the Parent Corporation, displeasing someone in Washington who can make that tax break very hard to come by.

JUSTIN

What, so it's over? Just like that?

BRETT

He's greenlighting The Passion of Moses. g*y's out. God's in.

Disgusted, he leaves. Connor looks back at a stunned Justin, who backs up to sit at his drawing board with a deep sigh.

EMPLOYEE [OS]

Wow.

CUT TO: INT. LINDSAY AND MELANIE'S HOUSE - DAY

Melanie holds J.R. in the living room. Lindsay and Gus come in the front door, where Lindsay crouches to remove his coat. Gus sneezes.

MELANIE

Oh, sweetie, do you have a cold?

Lindsay wipes Gus's nose with a tissue.

LINDSAY

Yeah, I think he caught one last night.

MELANIE

I wouldn't be surprised. Dragging him over here so we can play one big happy family.

Gus goes upstairs. Lindsay stands.

LINDSAY

I didn't drag him. And you're the one who called. Who insisted we keep up this ridiculous charade.

MELANIE

And you saw why I did, didn't you? Now we have to deal with all their sh*t as well as our own.

Beat. Bounces J.R. in her arms.

MELANIE

Oh, speaking of sh*t. Did you bring his medication?

They walk into the dining room where Melanie lays J.R. down on the table to change her diaper. Lindsay pulls a bottle out of her purse.

LINDSAY

Delicious cherry flavor your kids will love? He hates it.

She sets the medicine down on the table, moves toward J.R.

LINDSAY

Here, why don't you let me do it...

Melanie angrily waves her off. Lindsay backs away.

MELANIE

Cos I can do it! Would you just go to work already? [quietly] God.

Lindsay walks away, then turns to talk to Melanie's back.

LINDSAY

It had to be done. We had to tell them.

Melanie closes her eyes, drops her head down, sad.

MELANIE

It's just that...

Shakes her head some more.

LINDSAY

What?

More head shaking from Melanie.

MELANIE

Telling them ... seeing their faces ... knowing they know.

J.R. half-cries. Melanie squeezes her eyes closed, turns. Beat.

MELANIE

Somehow makes it real.

Long beat. J.R. fusses. Lindsay leaves. We hear the front door open/close as Melanie turns back to J.R.

CUT TO: EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET IN THE SUBURBS - DAY

Beautiful houses with manicured yards. The streets are rain-wet. Eli (holding Devon's hand) and Monty (pushing Ondine in a stroller) walk down the sidewalk. Michael and Ben follow.

ELI

[to Devon] Yeah?

Devon chatters. Long beat.

ELI

[to the adults] We're having some of the neighbors over Sunday for a BBQ. I've asked a couple members of our illustrious English department, Kelly and Braverman--

MONTY

Why don't you guys come too?

MICHAEL

That sounds great.

ELI

And be sure to bring Hunter.

Devon is still chattering, Eli looks down and laughs.

MAN #1 [OS]

Hi!

Monty waves across the street. The others look and smile.

MONTY

Hey!

Across the street, we see two smiling men on the sidewalk with a double stroller. They wave.

MAN #2

Oh, how's it going?

Michael gives a "hey" wave back.

ELI

They just moved in across the street. They got twins.

BEN

Ahh, seems like everyone around here's got kids.

He glances at Michael.

MONTY

Won't be long before you'll be out strolling along with your own bambino, too.

Points across the street at a house.

MONTY

This one just went on the market.

Hand on Monty's arm, Eli stops the group to look.

ELI

Nice yard, but it could use a make-over.

Michael and Ben turn to look.

MONTY [OS]

Couldn't we all.

The camera pans down the front of a two-story red house.

MONTY [OS]

Wonder what they're asking.

ELI [OS]

Well, in that condition, it's probably a bargain.

Camera pans further down. The roof is buckled, the paint chipped, plants are dying. There's a Remax reality sign in the yard. Pat Gavendall - 555-2368.

ELI

Sure you guys aren't interested?

Ben looks at him. Michael keeps staring at the house.

BEN

[reluctant] Oh ... we've talked it over and we've decided to stay put for now.

MICHAEL

How soon could we see it?

Ben looks at Michael, frowns in confused shock. Michael turns to face him, face soft.

MICHAEL

Like you said, we're on top of each other in the apartment. Hunter needs his own space. Jenny Rebecca's gonna need her own room. A yard to play in.

Eli, pen cap in his mouth, is already writing on a slip of paper.

MONTY

We'll write down the realtor’s number and you can give him a call.

Ben looks from him back to Michael.

BEN

[quietly] I thought you wanted to stay on Liberty Avenue.

Beat. Michael smiles.

MICHAEL

Maybe it's time for a change.

CUT TO: INT. BABYLON

Aerial shot. Place is empty, the lights are up, glitter and trash on the floor, old beer bottles on the bar. Brian stands in the center, hands in pockets, looking around. We zoom in on him. Sound of a metal door clanging open.

TED [OS]

Brian!

Brian smiles and turns as a harried Ted walks in.

TED

So why the urgent message, 'Meet me at Babylon now?'

Brian walks behind the bar.

BRIAN

I found that little something you told me to treat myself to.

TED

What?

BRIAN

You're standing in it.

Ted looks down. Brian pours a drink. Ted looks up, realization dawning.

TED

Babylon?!

Brian knocks back his drink as Ted walks over.

TED

I said the toy, not the playroom!

BRIAN

I want it!

TED

Oh, you want it. What for?

Brian comes around the bar, puts an arm across Ted's shoulders and leads them over to the stairs.

BRIAN

Well, I gotta keep the boys off the streets at night.

Ted sighs.

BRIAN

I've got to provide them with a warm, friendly environment in which to use ill*gal substances and have promiscuous sex--

He stops and points at Ted.

BRIAN

--safely of course!

TED

A noble sentiment, but investment-wise, not very practical.

BRIAN

And what would be practical, Theodore?

He starts up the stairs alone.

BRIAN

To get married and move to the suburbs--

Ted sighs and walks off a little. Brian continues up the stairs, looking down at Ted as he walks.

BRIAN

--become a home-loving, child-raising, God-fearing imitation heterosexual?

He scoffs, reaching the catwalk.

BRIAN

And for what? So that I can become another dead soul going to the mall and dropping my kids off at school and having BBQs in the backyard.

Shot of Ted looking up. We hear Brian scoff again, then see him reach the end of the catwalk and lean against the railing. He reaches out to touch a disco ball suspended from the ceiling.

BRIAN

That's their death. Not mine.

Turning to the panel behind him, he throws the breaker. House lights go down, dance lights come up. Ted watches. Brian spins back around to lean over the railing, looking down at Ted and yells.

BRIAN

I'm a c*cksucker!

Starts walking the catwalk.

BRIAN

I'm q*eer! And to anyone who takes pity or offense...

Stopped at the railing, he tosses some old confetti down as Ted looks up, entranced.

BRIAN

I say, Judge yourself.

Camera pans up from the floor to the catwalk. Brian, arms spread on the railing, is highlighted in blue and yellow lights and a dark strain of music beginning.

BRIAN

This is where I live. This is who I am.

Camera holds on him for a few beats, then slowly begins to pull back. The music swells.

COMIC BOOK NARRATOR [VO]

And as Rage stands at the precipice of a new world...

The music swells. Animated storyboard sketches fly by in Pride colors. Scenes: Brian at the railing; Brian and Justin kissing with "they kiss passionately" direction; sun and planets; Brian holding a "Hardbody Heroes" poster and smiling at Michael at Red Cape Comics; word "BRAVE"; Brian smiling at Michael; planetscape with the words "BRAVE NEW WORLD"; Brian, Michael and Ben at Woody's bar; word "NEW"; Michael talking to Brian's profile; planets; word "WORLD"; Brian looking into the distance; Brian in a crowd, looking alone; Brian head c*ck and in a tank top, speaking.

FADE TO BLACK.

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